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TRADE IN HIDES AND SKINS IN 1956

The United States has been a net exporter of cattle hides since 1952 and of calf and kip skins since 1953 because of record levels of cattle slaughter. This has reduced U.S. import requirements and made our cattle hides and calf and kip skins competitive on the world market.

Exports of cattle hides and calf and kip skins declined in 1956, reversing the trend of recent years. Shipments of cattle hides and calf and kip skins in 1956 were 17 and 13 percent, respectively, below the high level of 1955. Imports of cattle hides and calf and kip skins also declined in 1956.

Domestic production of other types, however, continues below U.S. consumption requirements and the United States is a large net importer of sheep and goat skins and to a lesser extent of other hides and skins. Imports of goat and kid skins declined but sheep and lamb skins increased in 1956. Exports of sheep and lamb skins were lower but these are small in relation to imports.

TABLE 1.--Hides and skins: United States foreign trade, average 1935-39 and 1946-50, annual 1953-1956

| | Average | | 1953 | 1954 | 1955 | 1956 |
|------------------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | 1935-39 | 1946-50 | | | | |
| | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| | pieces | pieces | pieces | pieces | pieces | pieces |
| Cattle hides: | | | | | | |
| Imports. . . | 2,580 | 1,872 | 455 | 443 | 344 | 341 |
| Exports. . . | 533 | 868 | 2,381 | 5,178 | 5,852 | 4,940 |
| Net imports. | 2,047 | 1,004 | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Net exports. | -- | -- | 1,926 | 4,735 | 5,508 | 4,599 |
| Calf and kip: | | | | | | |
| Imports. . . | 3,181 | 1,265 | 1,904 | 1,189 | 1,439 | 1,196 |
| Exports. . . | 555 | 593 | 1,580 | 2,567 | 3,579 | 3,107 |
| Net imports. | 2,626 | 672 | 324 | -- | -- | -- |
| Net exports. | -- | -- | -- | 1,378 | 2,140 | 1,911 |
| Goat and kid: | | | | | | |
| Imports 1/. | 43,260 | 36,639 | 31,904 | 25,231 | 28,504 | 25,763 |
| Sheep and lambs: | | | | | | |
| Imports. . . | 21,057 | 24,545 | 25,049 | 20,586 | 22,575 | 29,497 |
| Exports. . . | 21,230 | 696 | 419 | 586 | 847 | 807 |
| Net imports. | -- | 23,849 | 24,630 | 20,000 | 21,728 | 28,690 |

1/ United States exports are negligible. 2/ 1939 only - 1935 to 1938 reported in pounds only.

Source: Compiled from official records of the Bureau of Census.

U.S. Exports

Exports of hides and skins from the United States declined in 1956 for the first time in several years. Shipments of cattle hides declined from 5.9 million pieces in 1955 to 4.9 million in 1956; calf and kip skins from 3.6 million to 3.1 million and sheep and lamb skins from 847,000 to 807,000. Exports of sheep and lamb skins are relatively unimportant when compared with imports.

The price of United States' hides has been relatively stable but declined slightly in the closing months of 1956. Another record cattle slaughter in 1956 should keep U.S. hide prices competitive in the world market in 1957. Prices of calf and kip skins were higher in 1956 and were at the highest level since 1953.

TABLE 2.--Hides and skins: Prices at Chicago, annual averages 1947-56, monthly averages January 1956 - February 1957

| | : Northern : | | :Light native: | | Heavy native |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------|----------------|---|--------------|
| | : calf skins: | Kip skins | :cow hides : | | steer hides |
| | : Cents per : | Cents per | : Cents per : | | Cents per |
| | : pound : | pound | : pound : | | pound |
| Annual: | : | : | : | : | : |
| 1947. | : 78.0 : | 46.7 | : 28.7 : | : | 27.3 |
| 1948. | : 60.8 : | 39.3 | : 28.4 : | : | 27.7 |
| 1949. | : 60.2 : | 44.2 | : 25.3 : | : | 22.6 |
| 1950. | : 69.7 : | 52.9 | : 29.1 : | : | 26.8 |
| 1951. | : 63.6 : | 50.8 | : 34.2 : | : | 31.0 |
| 1952. | : 43.7 : | 33.5 | : 18.1 : | : | 15.0 |
| 1953. | : 50.5 : | 34.7 | : 17.8 : | : | 14.9 |
| 1954. | : 38.3 : | 25.7 | : 14.3 : | : | 11.7 |
| 1955. | : 44.4 : | 29.3 | : 13.5 : | : | 12.4 |
| 1956. | : 50.6 : | 33.2 | : 16.5 : | : | 12.4 |
| Monthly - 1956: | : | : | : | : | : |
| January | : 51.1 : | 33.0 | : 18.6 : | : | 11.3 |
| February. . . . | : 50.0 : | 31.9 | : 17.9 : | : | 10.9 |
| March | : 52.0 : | 36.3 | : 16.6 : | : | 11.0 |
| April | : 54.9 : | 39.0 | : 17.9 : | : | 12.2 |
| May | : 51.0 : | 34.8 | : 16.5 : | : | 12.1 |
| June. | : 51.0 : | 33.0 | : 16.0 : | : | 12.8 |
| July. | : 51.0 : | 33.5 | : 16.0 : | : | 13.3 |
| August. | : 50.2 : | 30.0 | : 16.0 : | : | 13.6 |
| September . . . | : 50.3 : | 33.3 | : 17.7 : | : | 14.6 |
| October | : 49.8 : | 31.4 | : 15.5 : | : | 13.2 |
| November. . . . | : 48.5 : | 31.8 | : 15.5 : | : | 12.5 |
| December. . . . | : 47.9 : | 29.9 | : 14.2 : | : | 10.8 |
| 1957: | : | : | : | : | : |
| January | : 43.8 : | 27.0 | : 14.5 : | : | 10.0 |
| February. . . . | : 45.7 : | 28.9 | : 15.0 : | : | 9.0 |

Japan, Canada, and Western Europe are the recipients of a large proportion of U.S. exports of cattle hides and calf and kip skins. Exports to Japan continued to rise in 1956 but shipments to Western Europe fell sharply. Japan purchased over one-fourth of U.S. cattle hide exports and one-third of calf and kip exports in 1956. The decline in shipments to Western Europe, despite increased cattle slaughter and relatively favorable hide prices, reflects a slackening of demand and an increased supply in Argentina.

TABLE 3.--United States: Exports of hides and skins by country of destination, average 1935-39, annual 1953-56

| Country of destination | Average : 1935-39 | 1953 | 1954 | 1955 | 1956 |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | : 1,000 | : 1,000 | : 1,000 | : 1,000 | : 1,000 |
| | : pieces | : pieces | : pieces | : pieces | : pieces |
| Cattle hides: | | | | | |
| Japan. | 260 | 845 | 880 | 1,251 | 1,324 |
| Canada | 127 | 430 | 386 | 696 | 770 |
| Mexico | 4 | 63 | 206 | 778 | 702 |
| West Germany . . . | 3 | 88 | 760 | 717 | 434 |
| Netherlands. . . . | 24 | 278 | 1,243 | 783 | 284 |
| United Kingdom . . | 37 | 215 | 431 | 388 | 243 |
| Yugoslavia | 1/ | 237 | 319 | 125 | 244 |
| Belgium. | 1 | 37 | 133 | 137 | 21 |
| Others | 77 | 188 | 820 | 977 | 918 |
| Total. | 533 | 2,381 | 5,178 | 5,852 | 4,940 |
| Calf and kip: | | | | | |
| Japan. | 247 | 757 | 656 | 857 | 1,017 |
| Canada | 170 | 313 | 349 | 651 | 568 |
| West Germany . . . | 13 | 53 | 342 | 734 | 782 |
| Netherlands | 25 | 123 | 515 | 480 | 207 |
| United Kingdom . . | 12 | 89 | 240 | 363 | 98 |
| Belgium. | 10 | 62 | 106 | 76 | 47 |
| Italy. | 6 | 123 | 136 | 41 | 103 |
| Others | 72 | 60 | 223 | 377 | 285 |
| Total. | 555 | 1,580 | 2,567 | 3,579 | 3,107 |
| Sheep and lamb: 2/ | | | | | |
| Canada 3/ | 1,009 | 343 | 362 | 314 | 322 |
| United Kingdom . . | 80 | 12 | 60 | 154 | 222 |
| Mexico 3/ | 11 | 1/ | 19 | 215 | 103 |
| France 3/ | 38 | 27 | 79 | 90 | 86 |
| Belgium. | 11 | 10 | 0 | 7 | 43 |
| Others | 81 | 27 | 66 | 67 | 31 |
| Total. | 1,230 | 419 | 586 | 847 | 807 |

1/ less than 500. 2/ Includes goat and kid. 3/ For 1939.

U.S. Imports

United States' imports of cattle hides in 1956 primarily from Canada and Argentina totaled 341,000 pieces, slightly below 1955. Trade with Canada in cattle hides moves both ways across the border, however, exports to Canada in 1956 were more than three times the volume of imports.

Imports of cattle hides have been very low in the past five years in relation to 1935-39 and 1946-50 averages. The record levels of cattle slaughter in the United States have greatly reduced our requirements for foreign hides. Increased competition from leather substitutes along with larger domestic supplies has resulted in a sharp drop in hide prices since 1951. United States' imports of calf and kip skins in 1956 largely from Canada and New Zealand, were 17 percent lower than in 1955. Imports of calf and kip skins have been fairly stable since the war but are considerably below prewar levels.

Imports of goat and kid skins declined from 28.5 million pieces in 1955 to 25.8 million in 1956. Principal suppliers of goat and kid skins are India, Pakistan, Brazil, Nigeria, British East Africa and Ethiopia.

Sheep and lamb skins' imports rose sharply from 22.6 million pieces in 1955 to 29.5 million in 1956, the highest since 1946. Domestic slaughter of sheep and lambs was lower in 1956 resulting in greater imports.

TABLE 4.--United States: Imports of hides and skins for consumption, by country of origin, average 1935-39, 1946-50, annual 1953-56

| Country of origin | Average | | 1953 | 1954 | 1955 | 1956 |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | 1935-39: 1,000 pieces | 1946-50: 1,000 pieces | 1,000 pieces | 1,000 pieces | 1,000 pieces | 1,000 pieces |
| Cattle hides: | | | | | | |
| Canada | 550 | 419 | 303 | 381 | 297 | 210 |
| Mexico | 29 | 77 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Cuba | 14 | 29 | 14 | 1/ | 0 | 0 |
| France | 23 | 7 | 14 | 3 | 5 | 1/ |
| Germany, West. | | | | 7 | 11 | 11 |
| Italy. | 17 | 16 | 11 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Netherlands. | 5 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| Switzerland. | 7 | 1 | 13 | 7 | 5 | 3 |
| India. | 22 | 11 | 71 | 27 | 1/ | - |
| Argentina. | 1,309 | 712 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 99 |
| Brazil | 400 | 216 | 5 | 1 | 0 | |
| Uruguay. | 55 | 65 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Australia. | 31 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| New Zealand. | 40 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 13 | 3 |
| Other. | 78 | 287 | 14 | 11 | 4 | 5 |
| Total. | 2,580 | 1,872 | 455 | 443 | 344 | 341 |
| Calf and kipskins: | | | | | | |
| Canada | 394 | 342 | 777 | 585 | 556 | 398 |
| Denmark. | 4 | 8 | 38 | 50 | 36 | 7 |
| Finland. | 178 | 42 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| France | 548 | 80 | 235 | 123 | 148 | 131 |
| Italy. | 19 | 33 | 45 | 5 | 93 | 48 |
| Netherlands. | 76 | 16 | 39 | 18 | 88 | 49 |
| Norway | 103 | 9 | 8 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Poland | 92 | 57 | 309 | 119 | 140 | 53 |
| Switzerland. | 25 | 10 | 39 | 14 | 20 | 18 |
| India. | 67 | 168 | 129 | 64 | 47 | 43 |
| Argentina. | 156 | 35 | 0 | 1/ | 0 | 0 |
| New Zealand. | 471 | 149 | 201 | 200 | 238 | 301 |
| Other. | 1,048 | 316 | 112 | 11 | 72 | 148 |
| Total. | 3,181 | 1,265 | 1,932 | 1,489 | 1,439 | 1,196 |
| Goat and kidskins: | | | | | | |
| Haiti, Rep. of | 385 | 674 | 594 | 447 | 537 | 605 |
| Arabia | 0 | 775 | 810 | 61 | 60 | 76 |
| India. | 13,160 | 10,916 | 8,974 | 7,401 | 7,655 | 5,607 |
| Pakistan | 0 | 2,009 | 1,912 | 2,097 | 3,009 | 2,393 |
| Argentina. | 2,523 | 1,232 | 955 | 536 | 601 | 630 |
| Brazil | 4,172 | 3,028 | 4,055 | 2,557 | 2,693 | 3,121 |
| Peru | 837 | 757 | 579 | 770 | 852 | 816 |
| Venezuela. | 812 | 573 | 663 | 379 | 282 | 102 |
| Br. East Africa. | 726 | 2,134 | 2,702 | 961 | 2,307 | 2,069 |
| Br. Somaliland | 0 | 954 | 693 | 422 | 410 | 420 |
| Ethiopia | 682 | 3,084 | 2,842 | 2,707 | 3,134 | 2,731 |
| Italian Africa | 133 | 679 | 953 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Nigeria. | 2,084 | 4,037 | 2,880 | 2,095 | 3,329 | 3,429 |
| Un. of So. Africa. | 902 | 980 | 748 | 568 | 446 | 370 |
| Other. | 16,844 | 4,807 | 2,544 | 4,230 | 3,189 | 3,394 |
| Total. | 43,260 | 36,639 | 31,904 | 25,231 | 28,504 | 25,763 |
| Sheep and lambs: | | | | | | |
| United Kingdom | 1,419 | 1,216 | 1,277 | 707 | 965 | 1,213 |
| Iran | 4 | 346 | 2,004 | 1,029 | 1,232 | 3,499 |
| Argentina. | 4,030 | 4,175 | 2,495 | 567 | 524 | 846 |
| Brazil | 1,143 | 77 | 30 | 944 | 1,100 | 1,235 |
| Un. of So. Africa. | 1,098 | 316 | 15 | 0 | 64 | 172 |
| Australia. | 1,173 | 3,509 | 2,729 | 1,320 | 1,002 | 1,268 |
| New Zealand. | 8,699 | 11,087 | 14,404 | 13,306 | 14,320 | 16,350 |
| Other. | 3,491 | 3,819 | 2,095 | 2,713 | 3,368 | 4,920 |
| Total. | 21,057 | 24,545 | 25,049 | 20,586 | 22,575 | 29,497 |

1/ Less than 500 pieces.

Argentine Exports

Argentina regained its position as the leading exporter of cattle hides and calfskins in 1956. Total exports of 9.7 million pieces were 28 percent above the 7.6 million shipped in 1955. This increase was stimulated by a 20 percent increase in slaughterings and a revision of exchange rates. United States' exports of cattle hides, calf and kip skins were 8.0 million pieces in 1956 compared with 9.4 million pieces in 1955.

Argentina was especially effective in regaining some of the Western European market previously lost to the United States. Exports to the Netherlands, West Germany, United Kingdom and Belgium increased from 3.1 million pieces in 1955 to approximately 4.2 million in 1956. Exports from the United States to these countries during the same period declined from 3.7 million to 2.1 million pieces.

The domestic price of Argentine hides has been considerably higher than the price of United States hides, but a reduction of "aforo" values (the amount of foreign exchange earnings which must be converted at the official exchange rate) in July and again in November 1956 has made it profitable for exporters to buy high and sell cheap. Any foreign exchange earnings above the "aforo" value are converted in the free market at a much higher rate. The rise in value of the free market dollar was chiefly responsible for the rise in domestic hide prices in the closing months of 1956. "Aforo" values range from 50 percent of the world price to 80 percent for the high grade Argentine hides.

TABLE 5.--Argentina: Exports of cattle hides and calfskins 1/, annual 1938 and 1953-56

| Country of destination | 1938 | 1953 | 1954 | 1955 | 1956 |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Number | Number | Number | Number | Number |
| Austria. | 2/ | 8,668 | 5,500 | 0 | 104,258 |
| Belgium. | 610,670 | 41,059 | 108,342 | 119,498 | 188,278 |
| Chile. | - | 142,106 | 350,614 | 440,197 | 165,096 |
| Czechoslovakia. | 484,321 | 14,245 | 67,535 | 132,704 | 268,888 |
| Denmark. | 2/ | 1,500 | 600 | 0 | 2/ |
| United Kingdom. | 708,635 | 552,787 | 541,491 | 481,905 | 445,356 |
| Finland. | 86,453 | 578,633 | 258,386 | 203,179 | 301,851 |
| France. | 110,631 | 0 | 24,250 | 24,263 | 117,836 |
| Germany, Western. | 1,751,181 | 776,475 | 938,388 | 1,034,913 | 1,513,855 |
| Greece. | 2/ | 3,665 | 48,580 | 0 | 2/ |
| Netherlands. | 240,319 | 1,738,255 | 1,382,720 | 1,464,510 | 2,098,788 |
| Hungary. | 2/ | 111,332 | 245,944 | 123,125 | 222,854 |
| Italy. | 703,527 | 545,160 | 1,102,605 | 736,536 | 1,079,336 |
| Japan. | 348,138 | 216,232 | 27,801 | 164,069 | 117,912 |
| Norway. | 3/ | 20,725 | 50,132 | 42,336 | 2/ |
| Peru. | 2/ | 56,780 | 23,180 | 2/ | 2/ |
| Poland. | 373,587 | 400,371 | 446,751 | 751,143 | 507,896 |
| Roumania. | 2/ | 206,779 | 438,275 | 179,867 | 297,398 |
| Spain. | - | 360,873 | 54,907 | 33,996 | 2/ |
| Sweden. | 4/609,714 | 624,649 | 235,012 | 128,368 | 2/ |
| Switzerland. | - | 142,371 | 46,252 | 49,300 | 2/ |
| U.S.S.R. | - | 77,810 | 333,253 | 1,116,205 | 1,500,618 |
| Yugoslavia. | 2/ | 2/ | 91,392 | 216,541 | 181,957 |
| United States. | 5/976,472 | 2,126 | 0 | 8,500 | 90,923 |
| Other countries. | 189,407 | 5,690 | 207,354 | 140,129 | 529,033 |
| Total. | 7,493,055 | 6,628,291 | 7,029,264 | 7,595,434 | 9,727,133 |

1/ Includes kipskins. 2/ If any, included in "Other countries". 3/ Included with Sweden. 4/ Scandinavian countries. 5/ Includes Canada.

Source: Resumen Mensual de Exportaciones de Frutas del Pais; 1938 data from Datos Estadísticos.



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C O R R E C T I O N

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